Indian Lore
Merit Badge

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The Indian Lore merit badge pamphlet is HIGHLY recommended. It contains a lot of very good, interesting material that we will not cover in this course. At just under $5.00 at the Waco Scout Shop, it’s a great deal.
Requirements
1. Give the history of one American Indian tribe, group, or nation that lives or has lived near you... Tell about traditional dwellings, way of life, tribal government, religious beliefs, family and clan relationships, language, clothing styles, arts and crafts, food preparation, means of getting around, games, customs in warfare, where members of the group now live, and how they live.
2. Do TWO of the following. Focus on a specific group or tribe.

   a. Make an article of clothing worn by members of the tribe

   b. Make and decorate three items used by the tribe, as approved by your counselor.

   c. Make an authentic model of a dwelling used by an Indian tribe, group, or nation.

   d. Visit a museum to see Indian artifacts. Discuss them with your counselor. Identify at least 10 artifacts by tribe or nation, their shape, size, and use.
3. Do ONE of the following:

a. Learn three games played by a group or tribe. Teach and lead one game with a Scout group.

b. Learn and show how a tribe traditionally cooked or prepared food. Make three food items.

c. Give a demonstration showing how a specific Indian group traditionally hunted, fished, or trapped.
4. Do ONE of the following:

a. Write or briefly describe how life might have been different for the European settlers if there had been no native Americans to meet when they came to this continent.

b. --
c. --
d. --

e. Learn in English an Indian story of at least 250 words. Tell the story at a Scout meeting.

f. --
g. --
h. --
i. --
Current best evidence is that humans reached North America around 14,000 years ago, migrating from Siberia.
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Essentially all native Americans in North, South and Central America are related to small groups of early immigrants from Asia.
Dating human migration using mtDNA and Y chromosomes

https://www3.nationalgeographic.com/genographic

Tuesday, January 12, 2010
Humans reached the Texas area approximately 12,000 years ago. Archaeologists call the people who lived in North America before 8,500 years ago *Paleoindians*. 
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Their stone tools included spear tips, knives, tips for the end of atlatl darts, scrapers, and metates for grinding acorns or other seeds.
Clovis points
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They hunted primitive elephants (mastodons, mammoths), bison, elk, and a variety of other animals, some of which are now extinct.

Native American History in Central Texas

Tuesday, January 12, 2010
Fiberglass model of an imperial mammoth, La Brea tar pits
Imperial mammoth, George C. Page Museum
During the Archaic Period (8500 BP to 2500 BP), Native Americans were hunters and gatherers.
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Elephants and some other large Ice-Age mammals were extinct in North America, but bison were an important source of food and materials, and they were hunted with the atlatl.
Much of our information about Native Americans of the Prehistoric Period (2500-400 BP) comes from excavations in rock shelters and caves.
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Pottery came into use (~2500 BP), allowing food to be boiled. Baskets were used to store food.
Caddo and Wichita pottery
Corn (maize) was cultivated in the southwest from ~100 AD.

Other crops/foods included various beans, melons, squash, pumpkins, peaches, plums, sunflower, tobacco, acorns, seeds, berries, nuts, persimmons, goosefoot and sumpweed.
Before contact with Europeans in 1492, it is estimated that there were between 28 and 120 million humans living in North, Central and South America.
Current estimates indicate that as much as 95% of the native population of the Americas died within 200 years of initial European contact, due largely to disease.
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That is why they were so endangered by diseases brought by people from Europe and Africa.
The primary diseases that decimated Native Americans were smallpox, measles, whooping cough and cholera.
The size of the Wichita tribe has declined dramatically since first contact with Europeans in 1541.

1780: 3,200
1937: 385
Waco band in 1824: ~480-575
  ... in 1859: 171
  ... in 1910: 5
The Waco Indians were closely related to the Tawakoni. Both are subgroups (bands) of the Wichita Tribe, which in turn is part of the Caddoan Confederation (along with the Pawnee and the Caddo).
Wee-Ta-Ra-Sha-Ro, Head Chief of the Wichita. The round plate hanging from his neck is called a gorget. Painted by George Catlin in 1834.
The Wichitas were among the few Plains Indians that used tatoos. They sometimes referred to themselves as “the raccoon people” because of their tatoos around their eyes.
The Wichitas moved into Texas after the first Europeans arrived in the 1500s.

The Wacos established their village Quiscat near present-day Waco in the early 1770s.
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Another idea is that is from Wehiko, a corruption of Mexico, and given because the tribe was always fighting with Mexicans.
1770s: Wacos establish two villages near Waco, with ~500 people
1824: Wacos sign a treaty with Stephen F. Austin, who left behind a description of their village.
According the Stephen F. Austin, in 1824 the main Waco village had ~33 grass houses and occupied ~40 acres. They cultivated ~200 acres of corn and other crops. Another nearby village had 15 grass houses.
By 1830, the Waco village had ~60 grass houses, and ~400 acres under cultivation. They grew beans, squash, corn, melons and watermelon, and managed a peach orchard.

In the winter, the village was vacated and the tribe left to hunt buffalo. They lived in tee-pees during hunts.
1830: Wacos driven out of their village by Cherokees
1837: A major smallpox epidemic decimates the Wichita and Waco
1859: Wacos removed from Texas and sent to a reservation in Indian Territory (Oklahoma)
1907: Oklahoma becomes a state, and Wichita Indians located to a reservation at Fort Cobb near Anadarko, Oklahoma.

By 1910, only 5 Waco remain.
Tell about traditional dwellings...
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From spring through fall each year, the Waco lived in grass houses that were 15-30 feet wide and ~20 feet high. The grass was bundled and tied to a wooden framework. Each house had 10-12 beds.
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In the winter, the Waco would move north to hunt bison, and would live in teepees made of bison hide.
way of life...
way of life...

The Waco farmed from spring through fall, and hunted bison in the southern plains during the winter. Dried bison meat and bison hides were brought back to the main village.
tribal government...
The Waco had a **head chief** who met with other tribal bands,

a **sub-chief** who was responsible for locating new village sites, and

a **shaman** who was responsible for tribal religion, ceremonies, and healing.

**Men** were hunters and warriors, taught their sons older than ~10 years, and obtained wood for huts.

**Women** did everything else (that is, most of the work).

Indian Lore Merit Badge, Requirement 1
The religious beliefs of the Waco were probably based on those of other Wichita tribal groups. These make heavy use of mythical figures whose stories were told over many generations.
family and clan relationships...

For a given child, ...

...the biological father and his brothers were all considered the child’s *father*;
family and clan relationships...

For a given child, ...

...the biological father and his brothers were considered the child’s father;

the biological father’s sisters and the biological mother were all considered the child’s mother;
family and clan relationships...

For a given child, ...

...the biological father and his brothers were considered the child’s father;

the biological father’s sisters and the biological mother were all considered the child’s mother;

the biological mother’s siblings were considered aunts and uncles;
family and clan relationships...

For a given child, ...

...the biological father and his brothers were considered the child’s father;
the biological father’s sisters and the biological mother were all considered the child’s mother;
the biological mother’s siblings were considered aunts and uncles;
the children of the biological father’s siblings were considered **brothers** and **sisters**;

Indian Lore Merit Badge, Requirement 1
family and clan relationships...

For a given child, ...

...the biological father and his brothers were considered the child’s father;

the biological father’s sisters and the biological mother were all considered the child’s mother;

the biological mother’s siblings were considered aunts and uncles;

the children of the biological father’s siblings were considered brothers and sisters;

the children of the biological mother’s siblings were considered cousins.
family and clan relationships...

All children below the age of ~10 were raised by their mothers.

At ~10, boys were raised by their fathers.

All discipline within the tribe was the responsibility of family members.
The Waco band spoke the Wichita language, which is part of the Caddoan family of languages.
clothing styles...

The Waco wore mostly leather clothing. In more recent times, they traded for cotton clothing with the Caddo and White society.
The Waco were widely known for their bison cloaks/capes and blankets, which they traded. They also made decorated pottery and baskets.
food preparation...

The Waco ate simply. They ate fruits and vegetables raw or sometimes boiled. They ate meat raw, cooked over the fire, or dried/smoked. They made corn and acorns into a meal, from which they made simple bread.
means of getting around...

Prior to European contact, the Waco and Wichita *walked* from place to place.

Later, they had access to horses.

Heavy objects were carried on sleds/travois.
games...

(no information available)
customs in warfare...

War parties were led by whatever warrior organized the group.
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The Waco and Wichita counted coup, meaning that they tried to touch their enemy whether or not they harmed them.
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The Waco and Wichita *counted coup*, meaning that they tried to touch their enemy whether or not they harmed them.

The most prized way to kill the enemy was to stab them with a knife, at close range.
where members of the group now live...

If any descendants of Waco Indians survive, they probably live in southern Oklahoma near their last reservation site.
and how they live...

The surviving Waco and Wichita Indians were given land and US citizenship in ~1902.
Requirement 2 is homework.

The Mayborn Museum on the Baylor campus has exhibits on the Native Americans of the Waco area.
chopper
drill & awl
flake
saw
Marcos points
imported trade beads
Requirement 3: we will prepare and consume some “native foods”

Native foods include: dried meat (jerky), beans, melons, squash, pumpkins, peaches, plums, sunflower, tobacco, acorns, seeds, berries, nuts, persimmons, goosefoot and sumpweed.

Indian Lore Merit Badge, Requirement 3
Requirement 4: we will learn and exchange some native stories from Wichita and other Southern tribes.